

AT NYE'S REQUEST

BILL NYE GIVES A LETTER FROM A MEMBER OF THE SINGED CAT CO.

In Which She Desires to Set the Public Right—William Tells of the Doings of a Cream Colored Hog and Relates How He Was Twice Held Up.

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EN ROUTE IN NORTHERN KENTUCKY, SPRING OF 1894.
The charming southerner, Miss Matie Bullock, who does the soubrette and doubles on brass and stands on the door for the Singed Cat Opera company, wishes me to insert the following letter to set her right with the public regarding a domestic rumor:CINCINNATI, April 7.
Mr. Nye—

You could be so kind as to use your influence to give some facts to the American people as regards a scrap between me and my Parents.

The thing has been greatly exaggerated in a paper I read in a dramatic paper and does me father injustice for it goes on to say that he done me up with a stove led at home and then jumped on me but he is the kindest hearted man that ever gladdened a doctor's heart and I was at evening to fool around the old man and fondle his whiskers when the fire broke out.

I write this at his urgent Request, for he is a man which will brook no wrong by the press done to him or his.

Four years ago Father did come home from a clam bake with a cozy leg on and he so far forgot himself as to kick mother in the stomach and on the following day when he was once more my own dear Father and Mother

came upon him like a great dark wave and there was no hair of the same dog in the house to cure the bile, oh, it was tough to see me father put his head in Maw's lap and weep over what he had done the day before in his Eggenmerance.

No father was more kind hearted and once he did a dog on the same bill with Edwin Beech and March Wilder for the Actors' Fund of New York, but once he got shot in the calf of the leg by an enraged man who took me father for a hooligan and now his soul joy is in setting as my Siropone when I am on the road. He often tells me that I am of good lineage and that his strange beauty does not really come through the Bullocks but through a great Lord who visited America over a century ago and wronged some of our folks after which he skipped back to his castle and married well.

Will you give this fact to the public and say that I am yet with the Singed Cat Opera and Opera company though offered a perfect pudding to go with the Grimes' Bully goat Attraction or to do specialties in a Ripper-tore company for a summer stay.

No father sends love and ways if you want a good man on the door for your show he can do the work well and knows about it fully, having been "in the door" now for eleven years. He is a Yommure sometimes and would be full of spirits if he had money. He killed a nigger in New Orleans once and since that he has been more sad. It weighs on him. He offered \$1000 to any man who would fork the Sad out of his life for him and not give him pain. It is when this great sadness comes over him that he kicks mother against the rules.

But you can say that as for me, me father hasn't done me up for over two years now Cuz I got me eye on him and if you ask him how he lost them 3 front teeth you'll notice that he will flush up a little and walk off.

I could give a good musical and elopement between your readings if you like and cheer people up after your yommure remarks if you Chevro to do so.

Please send me 6 papers and oblige.

MATTIE BULLOCK.

Soubrette Singed Cat Opera Co.—en route.

We came through the town of Grand Rivers, Ky., the other day. We only stopped a moment for a large strawberry blond shot to back up against a hot box and warm his person.

The town was once for a few weeks thronged with people, all quarreling over lots and struggling to be the first on the ground. Now this old yellow hog, with white eye winkers, owns the place. The massive hotel rose to the second story and stopped there. The school building, untended by little feet, stands with its hand behind its ear apparently listening for the echoes of childish laughter which never, never come.

The Herald office didn't even have time to get out an equestrian bill, and it is too clean to show activity. The editor hardly had time to utter the words "Dintus ye hear the slogan?" before the town had taken wings and fled. His rusty slogan, with \$19 express charges on it, still stands behind the door.

He did not even have time to call a halt before the boom burst and broke all the window glass in town. I presume there are 150 holes, large and small, at Grand Rivers, but no gentlemen grow in the windows. No wheelbarrows to fall over stand by the open gate. No baby carriages scare the horses on the street. No honest Waterbury watchdog comes out to gnaw the ear of the sandy shot or bark at the train. As we pause there to fulfill our time card provisions, the thin, cream colored hog eats a little axle grease from the cars, warms his person against a hot box and goes back to his melancholy elope, rooting up survivors' stakes and eating the angleworms that grow where once the livery stable was at.

You remember how everybody gets panicky when the train stops out on the plains if you have been there during the road agent season and how there is always some raised up on the Mexican spur of the moment, as it were, to tell everybody else what the matter is. He does not really need to know what the matter is. Just something to tell the people is all he needs. It attracts attention and gives the passengers something to talk about till the truth is ascertained.

Once I was riding south from Cheyenne to Denver on one of Egbert's passes to participate as the honored guest in a large banquet presided over by Gene Field, when the train stopped suddenly in the middle of a big prairie dog metropolis, and an eastern man just across the aisle from me turned pale as he ejaculated through a real cannon's hair mustache:

"Me Gawd, we are held up!"

We could see nothing wrong, but

something was wrong, else we would not have passed in a shoreless sea of bunch grass 600 miles from hard timber enough to make an ax helve.

A bride in from Keokuk put her jewels in her hair swiftly, and her little skin purse and ticket went down the back of her neck mighty cheerful, I thought.

To open a conversation with her I said: "Madam, excuse the bluntness of a penniless frontiersman in cavalry trousers faced and reeased with buckskin, but if it should turn out to be Indians instead of banditti they would get all those priceless gems and moss agates of yours at the same time they took your beautiful scalp, and they would swap the whole thing at Antelope station or Evans, Colo., for a liquid which we in our untutored way call sheep dip. It biteth like a serpent and stingeth like a spider."

So I held the jewels for her in my own hair till we were once more safe, and I also told her to lean on me, as the groom did not come with her on the wedding tour, harvesting having come on a week earlier than usual in Iowa that year. So there was no one else upon whom she could lean. I can still recall the incident distinctly.

Soon the train began to back up. Whether the road agents were doing it or the engineer, vi et armis, I could not tell, and I hated to stick my head out, fearing that it would be shot into and disfigured for life. We backed for about seven miles at a low rate of speed and stopped at a little coaling station, the name of which I have forgotten, for that happened 17 years ago.

Pretty soon I nerved myself up sufficiently to look out and see what our fate was to be. We had also run out of everything to talk about, so I lifted the sunny head for my breast, where it had broken the stem of my pipe, which was in that pocket, and setting the fair one again upright in the seat I went cautiously outside.

I found that, as we stopped there an hour before on our way down, the fireman had forgotten his shovel accidentally, and now we had returned seven miles to get it.

Quite different from this was the stopping of the train years before on the main line and on the Green River division. Whether Bill Wilkins or Dannie Breese or Fatty Harris, I'll never tell, but as twilight was deepening into evening the long train swayed slowly on a side track 40 miles from anywhere on earth and gently came to a standstill, with the squeak of brakes, the hiss of extrasteam and that quiver and moan peculiar to a long train stopping on the wide plains in the teeth of a screaming blast.

Everybody jumped up and looked at everybody else. The sleeping car porter admitted that it was not a stopping place there for passenger trains, and that as everything was on time something else must be the matter.

Finally six or seven young chaps dared each other to go forward and find out what was wrong. They found the engineer standing proudly by his machine, and to inquiring passengers he replied haughtily by pointing over his shoulder down the road ahead; apparently four or five miles, to where the line of the horizon seemed to be bisected by the iron track of the railroad, and at that point, evidently booming right toward us, as though we had no rights, was a blazing, twinkling headlight.

Passengers began to breathe more freely and to murmur: "What an escape!" "How in the midst of life we are in debt," etc., and I started a purse for the engineer. My coolness and sang froid never desert me when there is a hat to be passed around. I collected as I went and was meeting with good success when an elderly man from Connecticut, with red throat whiskers and two pairs of spectacles, came along and asked what was the row.

"Side tracked for an east bound train," said I, collecting as I spoke and rapidly changing a \$10 bill so as to get \$5 out of it.

"Side tracked for your mother's aunt's cat on your father's side!" he ejaculated. "I teach school in Yale college by time and get \$300 for teachin' as-

SIDE TRACKED FOR VENUS.
tronomy text. Tenderfoot and pilgrim as I am and not conversant with the wild and crumbly west, you'll excuse me for puttin' in my ear, but that North American headlight on the horizon is not a part of the rollin' stock of this road, and you've side tracked us here for two hours waitin' for the planet Venus to go by."

And he was right about it too. I was so mortified that I got on the wrong car with \$55 in my hat.

How wonderful is the starry vault of heaven, and how strange that after centuries of reverberating thunder in the celestial dome the milky way has never soared!

BILL NYE.

A "Sweetbox" Investigation.
The Court—You say the prisoner made this confession to you voluntarily and without coercion.

The Detective—Yes, your honor; I didn't use nothing to persuade him but my bare knuckles.—Chicago Tribune.

Sincere.
Fiddleback—After seeing the dress suit you had on last night I want to offer you a piece of advice, old man.Clubberly—What's that?
Fiddleback—Get a new roommate.—Clothing and Furnisher.Could She Have Told If It Hadn't Been?
Edwin—Is this canned chicken or canned lobster, Carrie?

Carrie—I couldn't tell you, Edwin. The label was torn off the can when I opened it.—Chicago Herald.

And Ought to Be Put Down.
"The modern handshaker," said Uncle Allen, with his eye on the opera boxes, "is a notoriously high handed proceeding."—Chicago Tribune."Me Gawd, we are held up!"
We could see nothing wrong, but

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